

A SOJOURN AT THE WILLIAM PENN HOUSE, WASHINGTON, DC – *Arne Springorum*

In April, our family took a trip to the Nation's Capital. We had a grand time with all those free museums, monuments, art and the advanced spring compared to our Maine climate. However, this newsletter contribution is intended not so much to share with you what we saw and did but to motivate you to go visit DC yourself ... and stay at the William Penn House as a special Quaker (re-)treat.



I stayed there for the first time back in 1990 on my trip to DC with the Garrets, who took their kids and their German exchange student to see the Capital. A good idea to repeat 17 years later now with wife and four kids! What I remember of the Guest house was its location – walking distance to the National Mall. The William Penn House is located only 4 blocks from the Congress so each morning we walked past the Supreme Court and Library of Congress, past the Congress, to the Museum Mall. Washington is great to visit with a family, everything can be reached by foot and after each lengthy and tiring museum visit, there is the lawn of the Mall for the kids to run and use up the jammed up energy of “behaving in a museum” while Mama and Tata sit on a park bench with a cup of tea to watch them. Compare that to rushing traffic (or people) in the Big Apple.

Returning to the William Penn House in the evenings was like coming home – well, almost. With its little peace garden in front, it makes very efficient use of its space providing thirty beds (bunk beds) and a

small conference space in a four story building that is 20 feet wide. It certainly stays true to concepts of Quaker simplicity but it's well organized, with lovely and competent staff, a really homey library/living room where each day is started with 30 minutes silent worship and a very large dining room table for communal breakfasts.

We much enjoyed our stay at the William Penn House, the accommodation is priced very reasonably considering the location and in fact, it is nice to support a Quaker institution while on vacation! Patricia, who is one of the staff members we grew especially fond of, said they would love to host more families. So, which First Day School family is visiting them next spring?

Arne Springorum

PS: Of course, any one can stay at the guest house.

You do not need a family to qualify! For more information: www.williampennhouse.org
